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SUBJECT: CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM FORMER PORTUGUESE  
PRESIDENT JORGE SAMPAIO TO PRESIDENT OBAMA

The following is a congratulatory message from the UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, and former Portuguese President, Jorge Sampaio. The letter was faxed to Embassy Lisbon.

BEGIN TEXT:

Lisbon, October 9, 2009

Excellency, Dear President Obama

I should like to convey to you my heartfelt congratulations on the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to you. In my view it reflects recognition of the profound renovation that you have undertaken in respect of American foreign policy, diplomacy and international relations in general, in favour of multilateralism, co-operation and dialogue as irreplaceable instruments in the service of peace in the world.

The award of this prize also constitutes recognition of your right and timely vision of certain of the foreign policy priorities you announced at the very beginning of your term of office - especially the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, improvement of relations with the Muslim communities, the nuclear disarmament issues, the primacy of respect for human rights dictating the closure of the Guantanamo prison - which are a true driving force of renewed hope for the whole world.

In my view, the award of the Nobel peace prize to you, Mr. President, at the start of your tenure does constitute a focus on the future. I see in this award both unequivocal recognition that peace will come about via the path that you have now opened up and also a powerful incentive to it to be followed firmly and with determination, regardless of the difficulties, the snags and the challenges that we all know are strewn along the path to peace.

Renewing my sincere congratulations, I seize this opportunity to convey to you, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and personal esteem.

/s/

Jorge Sampaio

End of text

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